

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 OIC-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 AGRE-00 AID-05 IO-13 COME-00 TRSE-00

EPG-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AF-10

ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 /118 W

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O 211115Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1386

INFO USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 930

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OCON, WFC

SUBJECT:3RD WORLD FOOD COUNCIL, JUNE 20-24 MANILA

SUMMARY

IN ABSENCE PRESIDENT MAREI, SESSION OPENED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HANNAH. PHILIPPINE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE TANCO ELECTED AS NEW PRESIDENT. YUGOSLAVIA ELECTED TO ONE OF THREE VICE PRESIDENTIAL SEATS, OTHERS TO BE DECIDED TUESDAY. PRESIDENT MARCOS ADDRESSED COUNCIL. WFC ADOPTED AGENDA, HANDLED ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS AND MOVED TO REVIEW DRAFT MINISTER'S COMMUNIQUE (AS AGREED PREVIOUS NIGHT AT MINISTERIAL DINNER THIS TO BE PRINCIPAL PRODUCT OF COUNCIL MEETING). LATTER DELAYED SOMEWHAT BY UNAVAILABILITY TEXT IN ALL LANGUAGES. SECRETARY BERGLAND STATEMENT WELL RECEIVED. END SUMMARY.

1. HANNAH OPENED 3RD WFC SESSION BY STATING THAT THROUGH CONSULTATIONS, IT APPEARED MINISTER TANCO OF PHILIPPINES WAS THE COUNCIL'S CHOICE AS PRESIDENT FOR NEXT TWO YEARS AND ASKED IF THIS WAS UNANIMOUS VIEW OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNCIL. THIS WAS SIGNIFIED BY APPLAUSE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DECLARED TANCO PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL. IN ACCEPTING OFFICE TANCO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR CONFIDENCE ETC. STATED IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR WFC TO MEET IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRY AND HE HOPED THIS WOULD BE FIRST OF MANY HELD IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. CITED IMPORTANCE OF WFC NOT AS DEBATING FORUM BUT AS MEANS OF OBTAINING FORWARD MOVE-

MENT ON FOOD PROBLEM - IFAD WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE. HE SAID HE UNDERTOOK CHALLENGE TO MAKE WFC EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE AND ASKED MEMBERS ASSIST HIM. HE ALSO PUT HEAVY EMPHASIS ON FACT THAT WITH GRAINS IN ABUNDANCE IN CERTAIN AREA, NO EFFECTIVE GRAIN RESERVES SYSTEM IS YET IN EFFECT.

2. PRESIDENT MARCOS, NEXT GAVE A MAJOR ADDRESS. BEYOND WELCOMING COMMENTS AND HONOR BESTOWED ON GOP BY WFC DECISION TO MEET HERE, HE CITED PROGRESS MADE IN LAST SEVERAL YEARS, PARTICULARLY IN ASIAN REGION AND HOPE THAT FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND WANT IS CLOSER THAN AT TIME OF PRIOR WFC. IFAD DEVELOPMENTS, FOOD PRODUCTION INCREASES, PARTICULARLY IN SOME DEVELOPING AREAS, AND A RECOGNITION OF FOOD PROBLEMS IN MORE NATIONAL PLANNING. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE HE NOTED NO IMPROVEMENT IN FOOD PRODUCTION, IN SOME AREAS, LITTLE PROGRESS ON TRADE IN FOOD AND POPULATION INCREASES STILL SURPASSING PRODUCTION IN SOME AREAS.

3. RE FOOD AVAILABILITY PRESIDENT MARCOS ASKED COUNTRIES NOT REDUCE PRODUCTION - FAVORABLE SITUATION WHICH DUE LARGELY TO WEATHER COULD BE WIPED OUT IN LESS THAN A YEAR. ALSO STRESSED CRITICAL MALNUTRITION PROBLEM OF 460 MILLION OF WORLD'S POPULATION. HE SAID FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1972 GRAIN RESERVES COULD BE ESTABLISHED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND ENCOURAGED URGENT INTERNATIONAL ACTION. FOOD AID TARGET OF 10 MILLION TONS MUST BE MET AND FOOD TRADE MUST BE LIBERALIZED. HE SUPPORTED THE FAO INTERNATIONAL FERTILIZER SCHEME, SEED INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND A DOUBLING OF INVESTMENT IN LDC AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION. THE PRESIDENT TOOK PLEASURE IN NOTING THAT SINCE 1973, WHEN THE PHILIPPINES HAD A 500,000 TON DEFICIT IN RICE IT

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HAD BY 1976 ATTAINED SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN RICE, WITH A
900,000 TON CARRY OVER STOCK IN ADDITION.

4. THE MORNING WFC SESSION ENDED WITH SIX REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKING FOR REGIONAL GROUPS THANKING THE PRESIDENT, CONGRATULAT-
ING TANCO AND EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR EFFORTS MAREI.

5. AFTERNOON SESSION MOVED QUICKLY AND ROUTINELY TO ADOPT
AGENDA (ITEM 1), AGREED TO CHANGES IN RULES OF PROCEDURE
IN LIGHT OF UNGA CONSIDERATIONS (ITEM 2) AND ACCEPTED ON
AN INFORMATION BASIS, THE PREPCOM RECOMMENDATION ON THE
WORLD FOOD SITUATION AND OUTLOOK, ETC. (ITEM 3). NOTE: ITEM 2
RELATED ONLY TO THE TITLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND HIS
METHOD OF APPOINTMENT. THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE
FAO COUNCIL GAVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO THW WFC IN A BRIEF
STATEMENT AND A SIMILAR MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR AL SUDEARY,
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE IFAD PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WAS READ.

6. WITH REGARD TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE COMMUNIQUE, TANCO
AT THE MINISTERIAL DINNER HAD REQUESTED MEMBERS TO INDICATE
WHICH ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE PREP COM BUT LEFT OUT OF THE
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DRAFT COMMUNIQUE SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR MINISTERIAL CONSIDER-
ATION. IN OPENING ITEM 4 HE ANNOUNCED ADDITIONS OF 10
RECOMMENDATIONS. THESE WERE DISCUSSED IN PREPCOM, FOUR
DEALING WITH FOOD AND, ONE ON GSP AND FIVE ON AGRI-
CULTURAL INPUTS.

7. ITEM 4 WAS THEN UNDERTAKEN BUT DIFFICULTY DEVELOPED.
THE DRAFT COMMUNIQUE WAS NOT AVAILABLE IN FRENCH,
RUSSIAN, ETC. AND IN ENGLISH ONLY ON A LIMITED BASIS.
WHEN THE MEETING THREATENED TO BE DELAYED WHILE
TRANSLATION AND REPRODUCTION TOOK PLACE, THE CHAIR
INVITED SECRETARY BERGLAND TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL. THE
TIMING WAS FORTUNATE. THE ADDRESS WAS WELL RECEIVED,

AS EVIDENCED BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR COPIES AND COMMENTS MADE TO MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION (TEXT OF SPEECH REPORTED SEPTEL). APART FROM DIRECT IMPACT WHICH SPEECH HAD, IT STRUCK POSITIVE TONE FOR COUNCIL. THIS WAS CITED TO US DEL SPECIFICALLY BY YUGOSLAVS, EGYPTIANS, BENGALIS AND INDONESIANS. IT ALSO BROUGHT TIME FOR SECRETARIAT TO PRODUCE LANGUAGE TEXTS (WITH EXCEPTION RUSSIAN) AND THESE SHORTLY APPEARED.

8. THE LIST OF FOOD PRIORITY COUNTRIES (FPC'S) BECAME AN ISSUE BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA (WANTED TO ADD FIVE ADDITIONAL TO LIST OF 43) AND BANGLADESH AND THAILAND WHO SPOKE OF ADDING ADDITIONAL COUNTRIES ONLY IF THEY MET ACCEPTED CRITERIA BUT DROPPING THEM IF THEY DID NOT. FRANCE ALSO OBJECTED TO A NEW LIST AND FAVORED LEAVING DECISIONS ON ELIGIBILITY TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED. IN THE END, IT WAS DECIDED TO RETAIN THE CRITERIA BUT SINCE OTHERS, INCLUDING THE CHAIR HAD CITED THE FPC'S LIST AS FLUID, IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER IT NOW IS 43 OR 48. IT IS, HOWEVER, CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT STATIC. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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9. THE REMAINING ARGUMENT OF THE DAY DEVELOPED OVER THE VALIDITY OF \$8.3 BILLION (1975 PRICES) ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AS THE GOAL OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION. AUSTRALIA AND THE FRG RAISED CAUTIONS CONCERNING EXACTNESS OF THIS FIGURE, SINCE THE SECRETARIAT HAD NOTED MORE ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE WHICH HAD BEEN ADOPTED IN CIEC. GENERALLY IT WAS AGREED BY DC'S THAT COMMITMENT TO SUCH FIGURES WERE DIFFICULT IN LIGHT "INEXACTNESS OF ESTIMATES." OTHERS (PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH) ARGUED OVER WHETHER TEXT SHOULD CITE "INDICATIVE" OF "AVERAGE" FIGURE. USDEL IN MEANTIME INTRODUCED SUBSTITUTE TEXT BASED ON CIEC WHICH SEEMED ACCEPTABLE TO MANY DELEGATIONS BUT WILL BE REPRODUCED AND CIRCULATED.

10. DISCUSSIONS ABOVE CONVINCED PRESIDENT THAT THERE MUST BE A MEANS OF PREPARING CONCISE LANGUAGE FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND GENERAL AGREEMENT ON VARIOUS PARAS IN COMMUNIQUE. HE PROPOSED TO CONSULT VARIOUS GROUPS AND SUGGEST TUESDAY A MINISTERIAL OR DEPUTY WORKING GROUP WHICH WOULD BE ENTRUSTED TO PRESENT FINAL LANGUAGE ON VARIOUS PARAS TO PLENARY FOR ADOPTION.

11. COMMENT: THE TIME OF THE MEETING THUS FAR HAS BEEN POSITIVE IN THE SENSE THAT MOST DELEGATES APPEAR TO WISH TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. THEY REMAIN AT ODDS. HOWEVER, OVER WHAT CONSTITUTES AN EFFECTIVE MINISTERIAL

COMMUNIQUE. HENCE THE REINTRODUCTION OF MANY
AGRICULTURAL INPUT ITEMS OF TERTIARY IMPORTANCE. SOME
LDC DELEGATIONS MAY WISH TO GO EVEN FURTHER AND SUBMIT
THEIR OWN RECOMMENDATIONS. WE ARE INFORMED, HOWEVER,
THAT TANCO IS ATTEMPTING TO PREVENT SUCH AN EFFORT.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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